

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____

1. a) Do you live, own or lease property in any of the following units? ☐ yes ☐ no

b) If yes, please circle those units. 4 5 12 13 28 29 30

2. Are you a deer hunter? ☐ yes ☐ no

a) If yes, what portion(s) of the deer season do you usually hunt?

- ☐ archery ☐ November firearms
☐ urban firearms ☐ muzzleloader
☐ youth-only firearms ☐ antlerless-only firearms

b) Circle the unit(s) where you usually hunt. 4 5 12 13 28 29 30 Other _____

Please fill out the comment section on the back of this card, and mail to: Missouri Department of Conservation, 2004 Deer Management Options, 1110 S. College Ave., Columbia, MO 65201

12/03

Option: Buck quota

Issue limited number of permits for antlered deer.

Advantage:

- Takes pressure off bucks and shifts harvest to does.

Disadvantages:

- Not popular with hunters who want to hunt bucks, but didn't get an antlered-deer permit.
- May discourage some hunters from going afield so fewer deer, including does, may be taken.

Option: Reduce length of buck season

Advantage:

- Reduces pressure on bucks, and possibly increases doe harvest.

Disadvantages:

- Not popular with the most avid hunters.
- May reduce hunting opportunities and days spent in the field.

Option: November portion of the firearms deer season after rut

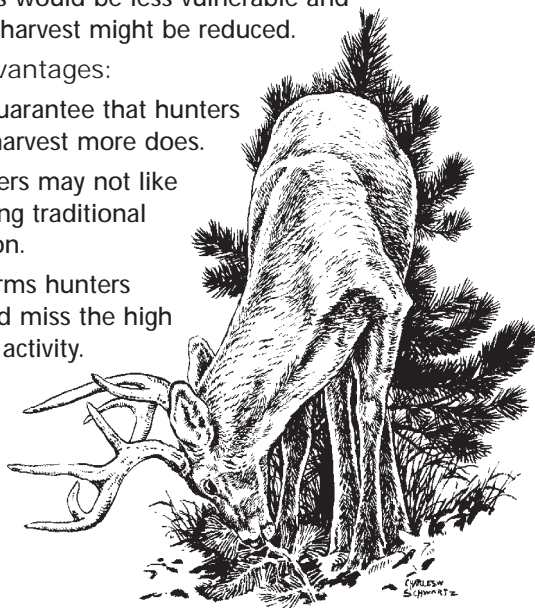
Begin the November portion of the firearms season at the end of November or early December.

Advantage:

- Bucks would be less vulnerable and their harvest might be reduced.

Disadvantages:

- No guarantee that hunters will harvest more does.
- Hunters may not like moving traditional season.
- Firearms hunters would miss the high buck activity.



Why change deer management?

Harvesting more than 100,000 deer in just two days was unheard of just a few years ago. We're still in the "good ole days" of deer hunting in Missouri.

However, deer hunter numbers are not increasing, most hunters do not take more than one deer, and surveys of Missouri deer hunters indicate a growing interest in managing for adult bucks. Achieving greater balance in buck-to-doe ratios should result in:

- a reduction in overall deer numbers
- an increase in adult bucks
- a greater potential to keep the deer herd at desired levels in the future.

The Conservation Department's goal is to continue the state's hunting and wildlife-viewing opportunities, while managing a healthy deer population. Other benefits could include:

- controlling property damage
- lowering the potential for deer/vehicle accidents.

Ways to express your opinions on deer management options

Conservation Department staff will be available throughout the state to answer your questions and hear your ideas on the 2004 pilot deer management plan. Public meetings will be held in each of the Department's eight regions, as well as in the pilot management units.

For meeting times, dates and locations, contact the regional office near you:

St. Joseph—Northwest Region: 816/271-3100

Kirkville—Northeast Region: 660/785-2420

Blue Springs—Kansas City Region: 816/655-6250

Columbia—Central Region: 573/884-6861

St. Charles—St. Louis Region: 636/441-4554

West Plains—Ozark Region: 417/256-7161

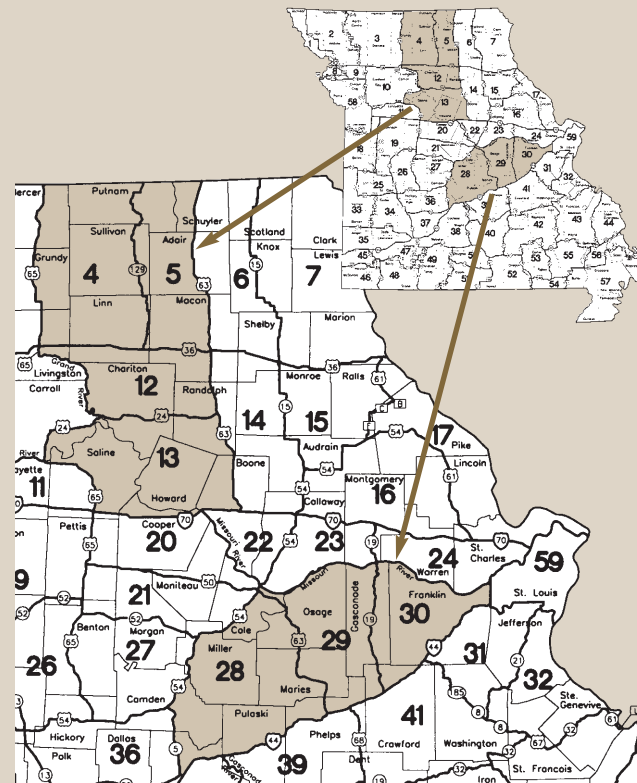
Springfield—Southwest Region: 417/256-7161

Cape Girardeau—Southeast Region: 573/290-5730

Thank you for your support of Missouri's deer herd and conservation in our state.

Your opinion counts!

2004 Deer Management Pilot Program



**Proposed for units
4, 5, 12, 13, 28, 29 and 30
to help maintain
a healthy deer population**



**Missouri Department
of Conservation**

Missouri is blessed with a diverse landscape, which supports a variety of wildlife. Deer are one of the most popular species, both for hunters and for wildlife observers.

The Conservation Department, with the help of hunters and landowners, has managed deer since its inception in 1937. Because of the diverse landscape, deer herds have grown at different rates in different parts of the state. The Department's goal has been to maintain a healthy herd statewide, thus providing excellent hunting and viewing opportunities, and keeping the number of conflicts between people and deer to a minimum.

To achieve these results, the Department's biologists carefully monitor deer throughout the state and regulate hunting in 59 management units. Regulations are set in each unit, based on deer abundance, deer-human conflicts, number of deer the habitat will support, hunter pressure and public opinion.

Does are too numerous in some areas

Starting in 2003, any-deer permits were valid statewide, allowing hunters to take does throughout the state. This shows that the deer population is strong. However, some areas are feeling the pressure of too many deer. More does need to be harvested in those areas to stabilize the population and produce a deer herd with a variety of ages.

Your opinion is important

To achieve these deer management goals, we propose testing new hunting regulations in selected management units—not statewide. The proposed units are 4, 5, 12, 13, 28, 29 and 30. In these units, surveys indicate strong interest exists for a balanced sex and age structure, which will also result in more bucks in older age classes.

A variety of management options will be considered for these units. It is the Conservation Department's goal, through public meetings and other communication with our constituents, to listen to the thoughts of deer hunters, landowners and the general public. Together we will develop the roadmap that allows us to best manage this valuable resource.

Management techniques used to balance buck-to-doe ratios

Creating a better balance of bucks and does and increasing the number of bucks in a variety of age classes are issues faced not just in Missouri but in other states as well. Biologists recognize there are a number of ways to manage the deer herd to achieve these goals.

In those states that have pursued this management direction (Arkansas, Michigan, Mississippi, Pennsylvania and others), the most frequent approach is to use a form of antler-point limitations on buck harvest and to expand doe harvest opportunities. Biological assessments of Missouri's deer herd suggest that antler-point limitations would be effective. Missouri biologists also have examined an array of other options, some of which are listed below.

Please read through the following options, and let us know your preference and why. For more information, come to one of the public meetings to be held around the state early in 2004.

Option: Antler restriction

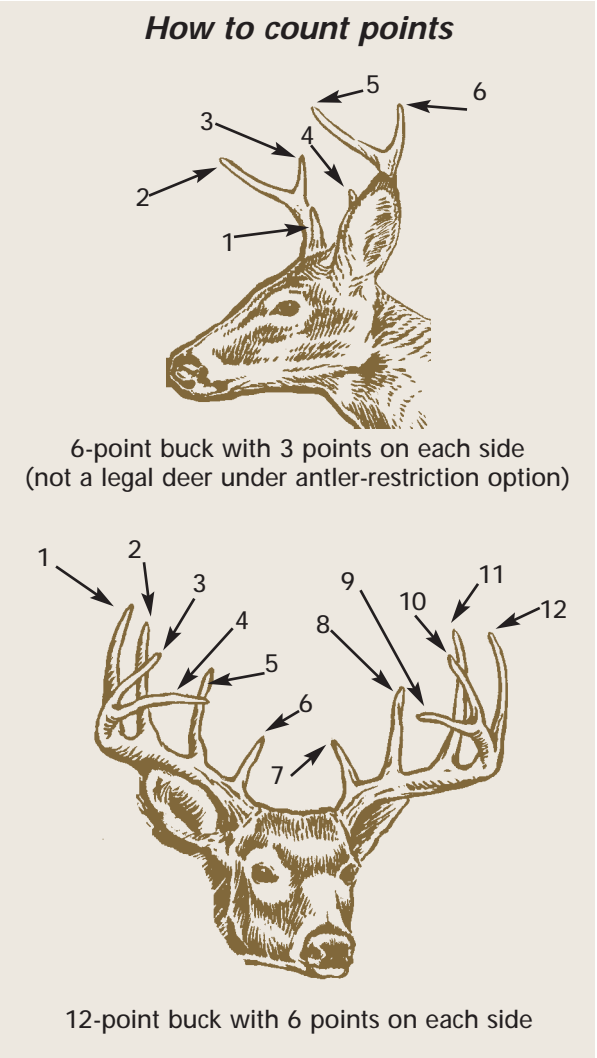
Deer with a single point on at least one side (spiked bucks) or with 4 points or more on at least one side may be taken.

Advantages:

- Takes pressure off younger bucks and allows them to grow into an older age class.
- Allows spike bucks, which sometimes can be mistaken for does, to be taken.
- Allows majority of hunters to continue to hunt as they prefer because studies show that many Missourians hunt bucks opening weekend and antlerless deer later in the season.
- Allows hunters to take trophy deer when the opportunity arises.

Disadvantages:

- If hunters pass up does and only wait for mature bucks to come by, the management goal won't be achieved and more restrictions on harvesting bucks may be necessary in the future.
- Hunters may have trouble distinguishing number of points.



Option: Earn a buck

Before an antlered deer can be taken, a doe must be harvested and checked.

Advantages:

- Quickest way to take pressure off bucks and to increase doe harvest.
- Reduces the buck harvest, thus allowing more bucks to grow into an older age class.

Disadvantage:

- Usually unpopular with hunters who have had to pass up a buck because they haven't harvested a doe.

Thank you for your interest in helping to wisely manage Missouri's deer!

Please tell us which management option you prefer for pilot units 4, 5, 12, 13, 28-30.

- ☐ Antler restriction
- ☐ Firearms deer season after rut
- ☐ Earn a buck
- ☐ Other option (please comment below)
- ☐ Buck quota
- ☐ No opinion
- ☐ Reduce length of buck season

Comments: _____



Don't forget to fill out the other side of this card.